
YOUTH'S MONITOR:

A

FUNERAL SERMON.

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FUNERAL SERMON.

OCCASIONED BY THE DECEASE OF

MR. JOHN PARSONS.

PREACHED ON SUNDAY, AUG. 17. 1777.

AT ST. SEPULCHRE'S CHURCH.

By C. DE COETLOGON, A. M.

(C. D. C.)

K

By thousands, *now*, resigning their last breath,
And calling thee—wert thou so wise to hear!
By guilt's last audit, and eternal night—
BE WISE.

YOUNG.

L O N D O N:

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W. Musgrave!

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Years old.



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*Remember now thy Creator in the Days of thy Youth, while the evil Days come not, nor the Years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no Pleasure in them. Eccles. xii. 1. **

THIS Book, from which I have selected the words of the text, is called, Ecclesiastes, or the Preacher: it was written by the wisest of mere men, and in his best, his happiest, his most serious moments. The subject of it, and its chief design, is to shew the vanity and emptiness of all sub-lunary pursuits and enjoyments; that the highest gratifications of time and sense are insufficient to satisfy an immortal spirit—

* See an interesting sermon on this text by the Rev.
Dr. Gibbons.

A

that

that the things which are seen are perishing, and unsubstantial in their very nature—that their very essence is vanity, and their end vexation—and that he, who would be really blessed, must look to things above the world and beyond the sun, which are unseen, spiritual, and eternal.

To illustrate this affecting truth, and to prove the point in hand, that all is vanity, the Preacher begins with enquiring into the *profit* which a man hath of all his labor which he taketh under the sun. Let it be supposed, that his heart is delighted with that which is agreeable to his senses and imaginations, in this present state; what then? Can these things yield him any true, solid or abiding satisfaction? Are they not all fading, transient, and uncertain? Do they not both deceive and disappoint? Is the eye satisfied with seeing, or the ear with hearing? “Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, all is vanity.” They appear but for a little while, and then vanish away: and the more the idle curiosity of mankind is humoured, the more inquisitive and unsatisfied it is. It still goes on seeking after something

something new, and the more eager and anxious its search, the deeper is its conviction, that there is nothing *new* under the sun.

But, what if a man should separate himself from the follies and vanities of sense and fancy, and should give his heart to seek after *wisdom* and *knowledge*; should set himself to get all the insight he possibly could into all things that are done under the sun; should make himself acquainted with every art and science, philosophy, history, policy, commerce; with the states, laws, and manners of the several kingdoms of the world; with the different tempers, capacities, and projects of his fellow-men—what, if he could gratify his genius, enlarge his intellectual views, and carry his discoveries, farther than any man did before him—what, if he were next in this respect to Solomon himself—would this also be vanity and vexation of spirit? Let one, who could not despise human learning because he was destitute of it, answer the question, and he will assure us that “this also is vexation of spirit. For in much wisdom is much grief;

and he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow.

We have often heard, and are hearing every day of the sweets of *pleasure* and of *mirth*; and how much they are to be envied who can indulge themselves in all the gaiety and elegance, the grandeur and magnificence of life: how charming it is to be able to make great works, to have a vast fortune, to build houses, to plant vineyards, and gardens, and orchards and trees in them of all kind of fruits; to have men-fingers and women-fingers, and musical instruments of all sorts; to have servants and maidens, and all the grand retinue of equipage and splendor; to riot in continual scenes of amusement and dissipation, and to wanton amidst the sprightly sallies of humor, wit, and repartee! These every body knows, are numbered among the first delights of the sons of men. But alas! what are they? what do they? or what *profit* is there in them? Are these to be accounted that good for the sons of men, which they are to do under heaven all the days of their life? “Behold, all is
vanity

vanity and vexation of spirit, and there is no profit under the sun."

But if neither the delights of study and science, nor of grandeur and honor, nor of pleasure and sense, are worthy the pursuit of a rational and immortal being, because they cannot produce any real satisfaction and enduring joy; who will shew us any good? or, who knoweth what is good for man in this life, all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow? Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter, says the Preacher, "Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the *whole* of man"—his highest honor, true wisdom, chief good, and last end. This is to be his grand and primary concern, all the days of his life, in every state and stage of it, which he shall be permitted to spend under the sun. All beside is vanity of vanities and vexation of spirit. Therefore "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, in the which thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them:" before the calamities of old age, the pains of sickness,

sickness, and the agonies of death come upon you, and all your strength and days shall be but labor and sorrow.

Such is the application of the royal Preacher's sermon upon the vanity of the world and all that is in it, the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life. Our business upon the present solemn occasion will be to fix our serious attention upon it, and

I. To enquire and explain what is to be understood by *remembering our Creator*.

II. To shew *how*, in what *way*, and with what *spirit* we are required to remember him.

III. To dwell a little upon the *particular season* of life in which we are *especially* urged by the words of the text to remember our Creator.

And, first, we are to enquire and explain what is meant by *remembering our Creator*.

The reason of this duty being enforced upon us, and the propriety of such an exhortation originates in, and is certainly a
presumptive

presumptive proof of the fall of man, and of his dreadful apostacy from God. For it is next to impossible that any ideas of God and religion, which we can entertain, should lead us to suppose that the state and character of man, as he came out of the hands of God, should be such as to expose him to the probability of forgetting his Creator, Benefactor and Lord, until ensnared and overpowered by some outward temptations. Forgetfulness of God is therefore to be considered as one of the peculiar miseries and dreadful consequences of the fall.

By the fall indeed, which brought universal corruption and death into the world, it is evident, both from reason and experience, that the whole human race have commenced a set of *practical Atheists*, and live as without God in the world : as if he did not superintend it ; as if his never-failing Providence did not order all things in heaven and in earth ; as if they were not at all indebted to him for every thing they have and are. Eph. ii. 12. This appears very strikingly in their preference of the pleasures, riches, honors, and esteem of this world, to those which the eternal God is so

condescending as to urge upon their choice and delight : whereas they think proper to chuse that in which he delighteth not, regardless either of his will or glory in what they do. Rom. 3.

It may seem a very severe indictment to bring against mankind : but it is alas ! too true, and what might easily be proved by the united testimony of scripture and matter of fact, that they are even *haters of God*. For though they profess to know God, to acknowledge him, and to love him ; yet in *works* they deny what they profess, and discover, that they are enemies to him in their minds, by the wicked works of their lives, and that they do not like to retain God in their knowledge. “ For the carnal mind is enmity against God in his true nature and character ; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” Rom. 8. But why ? On account of the fault and corruption of every man, who is naturally engendered of the offspring of Adam ; whereby he is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil.

In

In this affecting view of things, it is not at all surprizing, though it is much to be lamented, that we are so apt to forget God. If it be enquired, how this sinful and corrupt disposition shews itself—it may be replied—in our *unmindfulness* of him; of his *word* and *will*, and of our unspeakable and numberless obligations to him. For do we not even forget the hand that feeds us, and the God in whom we live, and move, and have our being? He is about our bed, and about our path, and spieth out all our ways: if we could ascend up to heaven, he is there; if we could descend into hell, he is there; if we could take our flight to the uttermost parts of the sea, he is there also: but notwithstanding this, though he giveth to all breath and life, and upholdeth the life that he gives, like Israel of old, “of the rock that begat us we are unmindful, and have forgotten God that formed us,” times without number. Deut. xxxii. 18.

The same evil temper discovers itself in a still more striking manner by our base *ingratitude* against God. For where is the person, or where are the people under heaven,

B

who

who have not received from the bountiful hand of God blessings more in number than the hairs of their heads, as many as the moments they have breathed, and, like the sands which are upon the sea shore, past counting? And, where, I may ask again, is the person, or where the people, whose sins and offences against God have not been innumerable too? In ages that are past, the great, the universal Benefactor, who filleth all things living with plenteousness, has been compelled to say to those, who have been distinguished by his richest favors, "*Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? Is not he thy Father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee and established thee? Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father and he will shew thee, thy elders and they will teach thee.*" They will tell thee the miracles of mercy and goodness ye have received from me. "*But, it is said, Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked, and then he forsook God that made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation.*" Deut. xxxii.

What

What base, what horrid ingratitude was here ! And yet, is not this the moral picture of every human heart ? Has not the Lord the same, if not greater reason to say of us, " Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib ; but this people doth not know, they do not consider. Ah ! sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the holy one to anger. Be astonished, O ye heavens at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord ; for my people have committed two evils, they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that will hold no water. Isa. i. Jer. ii.

Such is the general conduct, the exceeding guilt, the base ingratitude of the sinful sons of men ! Such are the horrid symptoms of their forgetfulness of God ! To *remember* the Lord then is the cure of this corrupt, this evil temper of the human heart : it is

to remember that he *is*; that there is such a Being, who is the God of nature, of providence, and of grace: by whose almighty Fiat every thing we see and know was originally spoken into existence; and by whose omnipotent arm universal nature is upheld: that it is but for him to give the word, and the earth shall again be without form, and void, and darkness shall cover the face of the deep, and all things return to their chaotic state. He, who cometh to God, must thus believe, and thus *remember*, that he *is*. Heb. xi.

And not only *that* he is, but *what* he is, in his glorious nature and infinite perfections. How he exists, in what manner, as he hath been pleased to reveal to us in the scriptures of divine inspiration; in the unity of his essence, and in a plurality of persons; three divine persons in one divine essence, Father, Son, and Spirit. For we are taught to believe the very same respecting each of these persons, without any difference or inequality of nature, perfection, or glory. We are therefore to remember the triune God, as an infinitely *holy, just, powerful,*
gracious,

gracious, and *merciful* being ; whose holiness obliges him to hate sin with an irreconcilable hatred ; whose justice determines him to punish it with eternal destruction from his presence ; whose power enables him to do it ; but whose unbounded mercy and exceeding grace dispose him to pardon it, in his own appointed way, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus : for “ him God hath set forth to be a propitiation for sin, through faith in his blood.” Rom. iii.

But we are to *remember* also, and particularly, in what relation the triune God stands to us, and we to him. We are to remember that he is *our Creator* ; that we are nothing and *have* nothing, but what he *made* us, and *gave* us. What hast thou then that thou hast not received ? Hast thou an *upright form* ? Art thou fearfully and wonderfully made ? Remember it was in the sovereign will of thy Maker to create thee a brute, or a man ? Hast thou *Reason* ? Remember, it is the gift of heaven, and never was designed to be prostituted to the vile service of sin, satan, and infidelity, but to be used and enjoy'd to the glory of God. Hast thou

thou riches, health, or honour? Remember, every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above. "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, the power, the majesty, and the glory: both riches and honour come of thee; thine is the kingdom, and thou rulest over all." 1 Chron. xxix. 11, 12.

God is therefore to be remember'd as our great *Creator*, and bountiful *Benefactor*. And we are to consider him as our continual *Preserver*; who upholdeth our souls in life, and in whose power it is to stop the current, or to cut the thread, whensoever it pleaseth him. But, above all, we should never lose sight of him in the endearing relation of a *Redeemer*; who came from heaven to seek and to save them, who were lost; lost to God, to happiness, to peace: who poured out his soul unto death, to deliver us from the bitter pains of everlasting death: who paid down his own, his precious life, to ransom our lives from the pit of destruction. Yes——

"The ransom was paid down; the fund

"of heav'n,

"Heav'n's inexhaustible, exhausted fund,

"Ama-

“ Amazing, and amaz’d, pour’d forth its
 “ price,
 “ All price beyond : tho’ curious to com-
 “ pute,
 “ Archangels fail’d to cast the mighty sum :
 “ Its value vast, ungrasp’d by minds *create*,
 “ For-ever hides, and glows in the Su-
 “ preme.”

And was the ransom paid ? It was : and
 paid, not for angels, but for men. For,
 “ verily he took not on him the nature of
 angels ; but he took on him the seed of A-
 braham. And can we but remember this ?
 Is it possible that human creatures should
 be fallen so low, as to forget *such* an event ?
 An event, that confounded universal nature,
 and fill’d heav’n itself with astonishment
 and surprize ! “ Which things the angels
 desire to look into.” O my fellow-sinners,
 whatever you forget besides, *remember Jesus*
Christ ; remember what he *did*, and what he
suffer’d, and what he is *now doing* at the
 right hand of God in glory, for the redemp-
 tion of poor, guilty, condemn’d criminals,
 like you and me.

After

After all, there is another very interesting relation, in which one of the co-equal persons in the Godhead stands to us, and which we should ever keep in memory ; and that is, the relation of a *Sanctifier*. This is the office of the Holy Ghost ; who sanctifieth all the elect people of God, because they are unclean and unholy in themselves, and therefore unfit and unable to have fellowship with an holy God in time, or to be admitted to his beatific presence in eternity. Fallen creatures are full of the defilement of sin ; which renders them objects of the divine hatred and displeasure, and excludes them from the kingdom of heaven. They must therefore be washed, and sanctified, and renewed. For “ without holiness no man shall see the Lord.” And this is the work of the Holy Spirit ; whose office it is to renew the sinner in the spirit of his mind, to change him into the divine image, and to prepare him for that blissful state, where there is fullness of joy, and rivers of pleasure for evermore.

This is what is meant by remembering our Creator. But,

2dly, It may be proper to shew, in a more explicit manner, with what spirit and temper of heart we are to remember our Creator.

The first idea with which true religion, and indeed with which every thing that pretends to religion, must inspire the mind, respecting the glorious God, is, that of Adoration. For the invisible things of him are clearly seen from the things that are made, and which force themselves upon our sight, even his eternal power and godhead. So that the very heathens, unassisted as they were with the light of divine revelation, are represented as without excuse, if destitute of a spirit of pious adoration.

One should indeed be apt to suppose it impossible for a rational creature to lift up his eyes, and behold the wondrous works of God in universal nature, without solemnly adoring the great Creator of all. How natural to exclaim upon such occasions, while the heavens declare the glory of God, and

C

the

the firmament sheweth his handy work,
 " O Lord, our governor, how excellent is
 thy name in all the world ! When I con-
 sider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,
 the moon and the stars which thou hast or-
 dained ; Lord, what is *man*, that thou art
 mindful of him, or the son of man, that
 thou regardest him !" Ps. viii.

" These are thy glorious works, Parent of
 good ;
 Thine this universal frame, thus wondrous
 fair,
 THYSELF how wondrous then !"——

How just, how natural, how almost un-
 avoidable, are such reflections as these, to
 a mind that is not intirely debased to a le-
 vel with brutality itself ! Not that our re-
 membrance of the Creator is to stop here,
 or to rest in a spirit of adoration. For he is
 not only that great and glorious Being, by
 whose power every thing we behold and
 enjoy was made and is preserved ; but he is
 a Being of infinite beauty and excellency,
 loveliness and perfection : whatever degrees
 of

of beauty, excellency, and loveliness we admire in any other being or thing, are only so many rays and emanations from that essential fullness of perfection and glory which is in him; in him originally, and in him only. On which account he is worthy of, and demands the highest esteem, the supreme affection of all rational creatures, whom he hath made capable of knowing, loving, and enjoying himself. It is the *first* and *great* commandment of his law, that they should love him with all their heart, and mind, and soul, and strength. And this is a precept which is founded upon the highest reason, upon the most perfect fitness of things. Inasmuch that, if our Creator had never done any thing more for us than making us capable of knowing and loving him, it would be our wisdom, duty, happiness, and glory, to love him with all our heart, &c.

But every one must acknowledge, that we have additional and abundant reasons to remember him affectionately, and gratefully too; with the most fervent gratitude, and heartfelt praises: especially when we con-

sider how many repeated, and unmerited mercies we are receiving every day, every hour, every moment, from his gracious and benign hand ; his goodness, his care, and protection ; our creation, our preservation, and all the blessings of this life ; but, above all, when we remember his inestimable love in the redemption of the world by Jesus Christ, the means of grace, and the hope of glory, who among us will not be ready to cry out,

“ O may I breathe no longer, than I breathe
My soul in praise to him who gave my soul,
And all her infinite of prospect fair,
Cut thro’ the shades of hell, great LOVE ! by
thee,

O most adorable ! most unador’d !
Where shall that praise begin, which ne’er
should end ?

Praise ! flow for ever (if astonishment
Will give thee leave), my praise ! for ever
flow ;

Praise, ardent, cordial, constant, to high
Heav’n

More

More fragrant than *Arabia* sacrific'd,
And all her spicy mountains in a flame."

Gratitude like this cannot fail of producing that life of purity and obedience, of desire to do the will of God, of study to please him, and fear to offend him, with which it becomes us to remember our Creator. What principle more powerful than that of love; what motive more inducing than that of gratitude! If the remembrance of creating, providential, and redeeming love will not constrain us no longer to live to ourselves, but to live to God, nothing can. "*Remember*, said the Jewish lawgiver to the children of Israel, all the way which the Lord thy God hath led thee these forty years in the wilderness: and then adds, *therefore* thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him." Thus shalt thou remember the Lord thy God, as a testimony of thine obedience, and gratitude, and love.

In such a spirit, and with such a temper of heart, are we to remember our Creator; with a spirit of adoration, affection,

tion, obedience, and praise; at all times, and in all places: because he is the same lovely object, the same glorious being, the same generous benefactor, yesterday, to-day, and for ever. But, in the passage before us, the wise man has referr'd to a particular season: we are therefore,

3dly, To take some notice of the particular season in which we are exhorted more especially to remember our Creator, viz. in the days of our youth; while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, in which thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.

The stages of human life have generally been divided into four, and have been likened to the four seasons of the year; infancy or childhood, youth, manhood, and old age. In infancy, our reason just begins to dawn; but our senses gain the ascendancy, and take the lead; so that we can hardly be said to have any clear and distinct ideas of God or of religion. In youth, the tender mind begins to open, to exert its intellectual powers, and to receive impressions and views of things which are of the utmost consequence. In this state or stage
of

of life the greatest care and attention are to be observed, lest the mind receive an evil taint which no future endeavours shall be able to remove.

This is that tender and important season which the wise man particularly regards in the words before us. And, no doubt, in this respect, he meant to speak, like a wise man, from long and deep experience, not to say, *bitter* too. Remember *now* thy Creator, in the days of *thy youth*: defer it not to the evil days of infirm and decrepit old age, to those tiresome years, when all your strength will be but labour and sorrow, and when you will know, what you have been wont to call pleasure, no more. Remember now thy Creator; and why?—

Because these are your best days; the strength and flower of your days; the bloom of your life; and therefore the most proper to be devoted to the God of your life, the most worthy of his acceptance. As we can give him nothing but what we have received from him, let the first-fruits, the beauty, the glory of our time, be consecrated to the service of our Creator and God: then,
3
when

when all the faculties of the soul, and all the powers of the body, are most active, flourishing, and in their prime; when the understanding is most capacious, the memory strongest, and the affections most vigorous and warm, let our Maker, Benefactor, and Lord, be the great object of our consideration, remembrance, desire, delight, and joy.

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth. For this is the season in which, if in any, the mind is most tender, soft, and susceptible of divine impressions, of piety and goodness; as it is also of temptations to vice and sin. Young people are more easily affected with, and drawn aside by, the snares of the world, the flesh, and the devil; by the enchanting pleasures of time and sense, than those whose years and experience have or should have taught them the vanity of the creature, and the misery of sin, and, it is to be hoped, have made them wiser and better. Their desires after, and attachment to, society and company, expose them to many dangers, or are profitable to them, according to the company they

they keep, and the society they chuse. And it is more than probable they will fall into such company as will lead them in no good way. And "he, who walketh with wise men, shall be wise; but a companion of fools shall be destroy'd."

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth. Because your obligations to God in this season are so many, and so great; and your need of his special and extraordinary aid so urgent and particular. For what, but the supernatural assistance of divine grace can enable you to flee those youthful lusts which war against the soul, and by which so many are drowned in destruction and perdition? What, but the particular interposition of heaven can deliver you from those seducing and treacherous vices which a wicked world and a tempting devil are ever plotting against you? What, but the distinguishing favor of God can defend your unsuspecting heart from the evil designs of your fellow-men? Remember therefore your Creator in the days of your youth.

D

For,

And, among other reasons, let this also be taken into serious consideration, that it is possible, and, for aught you can tell, very probable, that you may be cut off in all the bloom, and health, and strength of youth itself; "before the evil days come, and the years draw nigh, when thou shalt be forced to say, I have no pleasure in them: before the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened; before the silver cord be loosed, and the golden bowl be broken at the fountain."

It sometimes happens literally, and frequently too, that "Man which is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble;" that "he cometh up, and is cut down like a flower; he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not." An instance of which has lately happened in the death of a youth, by whose particular request upon his dying bed I stand up at this time to speak upon the important matters suggested in the words of the text; and by which he, being dead, yet speaketh.

He

He was the eldest brother of a large and reputable family not far from this place ; to whom, I may with confidence affirm, he was much dearer than I shall attempt to describe ; and among the younger branches of which he had acted like a father and friend, as well as a most affectionate and tender relation. He served his time to a very respectable person in this parish, now present ; who, not only by word of mouth to me, but upon the back of his indenture when he resigned it to him, gave him the character of an *upright, faithful, diligent, conscientious, and pious apprentice*. These are his own words.

What a delightful character is here for a youth to leave behind him ! How uncommon, in these days of profaneness, dissipation, and immorality ! How rare, in this our land of levity and guilt ! How much more to be desired than that of a *deceitful, dishonest, idle, drunken, lying, irreligious youth* ! A character, which makes our very name offensive to those with whom we have been connected, and to whom we are unfortunately, by the ties of blood, related.

It pleased God, in his *distinguishing* grace and mercy, for surely such favor ought to be so called in an age in which our youth of both sexes are abandoned to every degree of licentiousness; to fix his attention upon things of the utmost importance to his eternal welfare about two or three years ago. And to shew you with what seriousness and sincerity he entered into the consideration of religious matters, he hath left behind him, what he terms, *a testimony or confession of his faith*, which was found after his decease, sign'd and seal'd. By the date of it, it appears to have been drawn up by him, when he was twenty years old, upon his receiving the sacrament for the first time; which, it is said, was in the very church, where we are now speaking upon the subject.

A TESTIMONY OF FAITH.

July 1775. Aged 20.

“ It has pleased almighty God, of his great mercy and grace, so to enlighten my understanding and to convert me, as to enable
able.

able me to see my lost and undone condition by nature and practice, and to shew me the necessity of a Saviour. And I have been enabled this day, by faith, to partake of the sacrament of the precious body and blood of Jesus Christ. I hope that I am truly and spiritually born again; as I now view with an eye of hatred those sins in which I used to delight; and have much greater comfort and delight in all things that are good. I know that I cannot recommend myself to God by any good works; but having a lively faith in the mercy of God through the sufferings and righteousness of Jesus Christ, I hope to be admitted into the kingdom of glory hereafter, and to join that innumerable number which no man can number, who shall be continually singing praises to God and the Lamb, that was slain and hath redeemed us to God by his own blood: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."—

This is his short but very comprehensive confession of faith. By which you see what were his views of the christian religion, and that he was not, like too many of us, an ignorant

ignorant professor of he knew not what, nor why. And as a striking proof that the religion of Christ is a religion of love, and always inspires its true professors with a spirit of noble benevolence, there is the following postscript subjoin'd to this testimony.

“ May it please God by his goodness to extend the same mercy and grace, and to enable every one who shall read this, when I am dead and gone, so that they may be converted, and be hereafter partakers of the same glory and eternal happiness; which is the hearty desire and prayer of

J. P.”

In a conversation I had with him the last time I had the pleasure of seeing him in this world, he discovered an earnest but humble desire to devote himself to the service of God and the good of mankind in the work of the ministry: confessing indeed that he neither could nor did expect any preferment in the Church of England, but that he wished to preach those precious truths of the christian religion to others, the power and worth of which he so deeply felt

felt himself. I told him how arduous and awful, though honorable a work it was. Notwithstanding which his inclination to it remain'd as strong as ever. Which appeared by his having entered his name in one of our universities.

It pleased God however to bring down his strength in his journey and to shorten his days, by cutting the thread of his life at the age of 23. He is now numbered, we doubt not, with the happy dead, and his lot is among the saints. He is delivered from the burden of the flesh, and has entered into the joy and felicity of his Lord; into that land of everlasting peace, where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest. And let us who survive him and are left behind, let those especially to whom his memory is most dear, remember that

—“ Smitten friends
Are angels sent on errands full of love;
For us they languish, and for us they die.
And shall they languish, shall they die in
vain?

I

Ungrateful,

Ungrateful, shall we grieve their hov'ring
 shades,
 Which wait the revolution in our hearts?
 Shall we disdain their silent, soft address?
 Their posthumous advice and pious
 prayer?
 Senseless, as herds that graze their hol-
 low'd graves,
 Tread under foot their agonies and
 groans;
 Frustrate their anguish, and destroy their
 deaths?"—

I am persuaded from the little knowledge
 I had of our dear departed friend, and from
 a conviction of his being in a state, where
 all is true benevolence and love, that he
 would wish I should address myself upon
 the present occasion to three sorts of peo-
 ple in somewhat like the following manner.

And first to those who are yet *Young* ;
 in all the strength of youth and in the prime
 of life. You may see from the solemn oc-
 casion of our meeting together, in a most
 striking and affecting instance, the *uncertainty*
 of life: a thing, which in our youthful
 days,

days, and in the warm converse of the world, we are, alas ! too, too apt to forget ; while we are fond of promising ourselves a long futurity of years : and upon this fatal presumption, how do we learn to *live*, as if we were never to *die* ; regardless of the favor of God, of the value of our souls, of the great things which our incarnate God and Saviour hath done and suffer'd for us, of the never-ending joys of heaven, and of the danger of eternal damnation.

Talk to the young, the trifling, and the gay, about *striving* to enter in at the strait gate—of seeking *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness—about *hungering* and *thirsting* after the things of God and religion ; and they will tell you, O, 'tis time enough for that ; 'tis too soon to trouble ourselves about such grave things as these ; they are proper enough when people begin to be sick, and to grow old. What then ! is it ever too soon to begin to be really wise, and pious, and happy ? Can it ever be too soon for a sinful, guilty creature to be in the favor of God ? to be possessed of the unsearchable riches of grace ? to live to the

E

glory

glory of his Creator, Benefactor, and Lord? to make his calling and election sure? and to secure a place in the mansions of everlasting bliss?

Besides, who told you, my dear young friends, that you should live to see old age? How know ye that your days will be prolonged till to-morrow's dawn? What, if you should never be suffer'd to lie upon a sick bed at all, but be cut off at a stroke, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, as many have been, without so much as time or power to say, God be merciful to me a sinner? And how many instances of this alarming sort have lately happened, to the astonishment of those who have heard them! Who can tell, but that you may add to the awful number?

Are not these things sufficient to convince you of the necessity and excellency of early piety, if you regard only your own interest and eternal welfare? But when you consider the duty you owe to God and to his Christ, as well as to yourselves; to neglect these great and important matters, is to add impiety, ingratitude, and profaneness

to

to self-murder ; and that of the most destructive kind, of soul and body too.

Let me therefore intreat you, my dear young friends, by all that's good and desirable in this world and the next, to *remember your Creator, who* he is, and *what* he is, and *what* he is to *you* ; how much you are indebted to him already, and how much you must be indebted to him, if ever you are ransom'd from the pit of destruction, and brought to eternal glory. Remember *now* thy Creator, in the days of thy *youth* ; without delay, and before the evil days, the dregs of your life, come, in the which thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them. I beseech you again and again, by the authority of the sacred scriptures ; by the advice of the wisest of the sons of men ; as you love your souls ; as you regard the favor of God, and wish to be interested in the salvation of Christ ; as you desire to live in peace, to die in hope, and to be crown'd with a blessed immortality—Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth. Indeed there is no time to lose ; for death is at the door, and after death the judgment : and if we do not remember our Creator in

this life, we shall repent of our folly forever in the next.

Should you unhappily determine to refuse this instruction, and to go on enjoying the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season; if, like the unthinking and irreligious of every age, instead of regarding the counsel that has been given you, you should be ready to say, "Come on, let us enjoy the good things that are present; let us fill ourselves with costly wine, and riot in voluptuousness and pleasure; let us walk in the ways of our own heart, and in the sight of our own eyes"—I have only to whisper this awful truth in your ears, God grant it may remain deeply impress'd upon your hearts — *Know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.*

My next address will be to those who have arrived to years of maturity. Your youthful days are now forever past and gone, and number'd with the years before the flood. But the question is, *How* have they past? In what way and manner have they been spent?

" 'Tis

“ ’Tis greatly wise to talk with our pass
hours ;
And ask them, what report they bore to
heav’n ;
And how they might have borne more wel-
come news.”

Yours, it may be, have been consumed
in folly, vanity, and sin. Instead of hav-
ing improved them to the great purposes
for which they were given, those of seeking
the Lord, while he was to be found, and
of living for eternity, they have perhaps
been wasted and murder’d in the anxious
care and inordinate pursuit of the perishing
things of this present world:

What! and are you still pursuing the
same empty, perishing vanities? Are you
still repeating the same folly, madness, and
sin in riper age? Are you still as uncon-
cerned as ever about the things of God and
eternity? Unhappy fellow-mortals! O that
ye were wise, that ye understood this, that
ye would consider your latter end!

Some of ye, perhaps, have children, ap-
prentices, and servants under your care,
and

and committed to your charge, who have been taught by your wicked example to live in the practice of every evil thing; in swearing, drunkenness, lying, dishonesty, and contempt of God's word and commandments. And have you never read, have you never been told, have you never seriously thought, that you must every one of you appear before the judgment-seat of Christ? That you must every one of you give an account of yourselves, of your conduct and example, and of the souls under your care, to God? Consider this, I pray you: and if you have hitherto neglected these weighty and important concerns, God help you from this moment to begin to lay them to heart, and to remember your Creator, before the evil days draw nigh. Else, what will you do, when God riseth up to judge the world in righteousness at his second coming?—

My last address will naturally be to those, who have passed the meridian of their days; whose sun is at least upon the decline; and perhaps, in the course of nature, almost

almost ready to set. May it set, not in a cloud, but in its brightest glory! For "hoary hairs and the grey head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness." And nothing can render old age respectable, but true religion; which inspires the soul with love to God and his Christ, with a desire to die, like the patriarchs of old, smiling at death, triumphing in Jesus, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.

But, on the contrary, what sight so truly affecting, melancholy, and to be deplored, as an old man and an old impenitent sinner, worn out and grown grey in the shameful, fatal service of sin; in the gratification of his lusts; in acquiring riches, or in the indulged commission of any evil thing!

If there should be such an unhappy character, to whom I am now addressing myself, blessed be God it is not even yet too late to remember your past folly, guilt, and shame; to remember, and repent; to be afflicted, weep, and mourn, for your numberless offences against the God of your life. Humble yourself therefore under the mighty hand of God. Repent, and be converted,

that your sins may be blotted out. Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world; and fly from the wrath to come, to that only, all-sufficient Refuge set before you. For there is no salvation in any other; neither is there any other name given under heaven among men, whereby you must be saved, but that of Jesus Christ.

True, it is the eleventh hour; nevertheless, it is but the eleventh hour: yet there is hope. Remember, therefore, your Creator. And may it please the Father of all mercies, and the God of all grace, to make old sinners penitent sinners, believing saints, and new creatures. And may the Lord dispose every one of our hearts, and those especially who are the surviving relations of our dear departed friend, so to remember our Creator, as we shall wish we had done when we come to die, and at the judgment of the great day.

F I N I S.



